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THE MEANING AND SCOPE OF STEWARDSHIP

Addresses and Discussions

Toronto Conference of

THE UNITED STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

March 7-8, 1939

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THE UNITED STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

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The United Stewardship Council

Since 1920 the United Stewardship Council has been gathering together men and women from the secretarial positions of the protestant churches to discuss the stewardship program of a local church and a denomination. The membership consists of these church representatives and about twenty-five other persons, laymen, pastors, secretaries.

During the last few years several stewardship conferences have been held in large cities and this volume is a report of the speeches and discussions of the conference held at Toronto in March, 1939.

Stewardship Year

The United Stewardship Council is now actively promoting a concerted action to give extra emphasis to stewardship during 1940-1941. Apparently the greater part of the emphasis will be during the church year that begins in 1940. Books for study and reading, plays and pageants, guide book for the church officers and other materials are being prepared. These can be secured from denominational headquarters.

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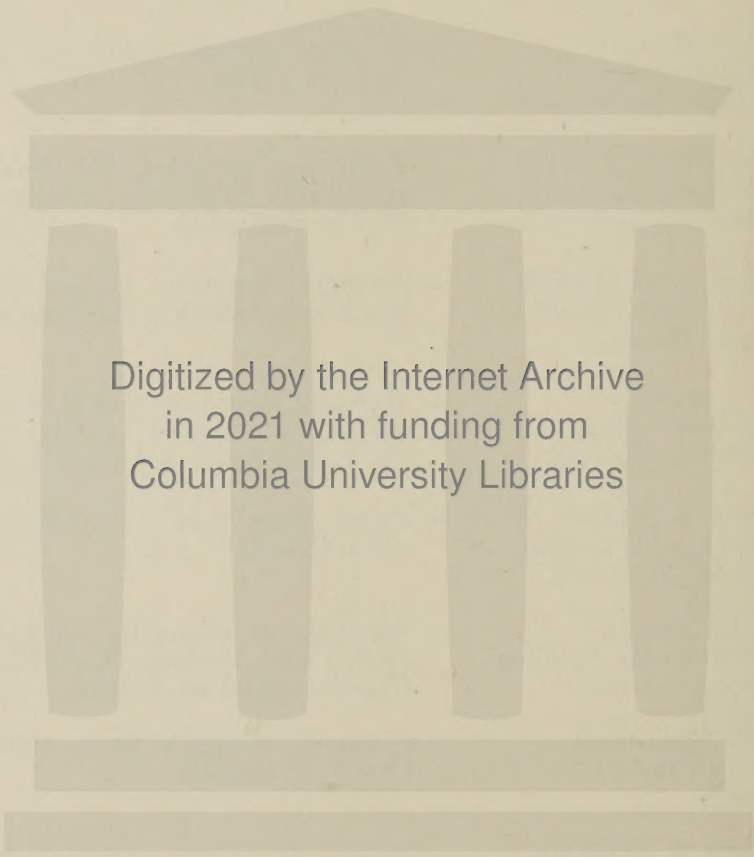
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The Deeper Meaning of Stewardship

JOHN M. VERSTEEG

I.

In one of his merry moments, Borden Parker Bowne said that philosophy is chiefly a disease of words. We have all but succeeded in making stewardship that! It has suffered such confusion of tongues that most of us are tongue-tied when compelled to be explicit. All words may travel, without let or hindrance, in the democracy of ideas. But they may travel so much that they become travel worn or travel stained. They may travel so fast that you cannot see them for dust! All of which has happened to stewardship. As a blanket term, it became a crazyquilt. It showed how quickly poetic license turns demonic. Stewardship was wounded in the house of its friends, who used this word for so many reasons that the reason for the word was lost sight of.

The story of what we have done with and to this word makes a footnote to the third chapter of James, and sheds a flood of light on an odd statement in it: "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man." Need I delay to disclaim perfection? Being Methodist, I am merely going on to it! Take a trip to perfection with me! The reason for a word lies not in its etymology, but in its sociology. Not, where does it come from, but, what has it come to? determines its status. Is that which the word denotes dominantly subjective: conceptual rather than concrete? Then you may generalize with it. Or is that which the word denotes dominantly objective: concrete rather than conceptual? Then you must particularize with it. But that is not all you must do. You must then also see to it that no generalized use of the word obscures its particularized message. Else you create confusion by suffusion, and your lips love darkness more than light.

But when a word has destiny written all over it; when besides its current and concurrent history or through these, it is making history, the obligation becomes the more imperative. You can then make an honest use of the word only if this denotation of its dynamic is also kept clear in its use. Time on end stewardship has been utilized to indicate that which we have in trust. But there has been stony silence about the stewardship of words. Stewardship of the word stewardship has been unheard of!

Damn a great word with faint praise, and its gospel somersaults into gossip, or sinks into gibberish. "Let your word be yea, yea, and nay, nay" means not only directness but distinctness. We must be concerned for the integrity of the key words of religion. They must not be made static. But neither must they be so dynamic as to be trodden under tongue of men. In their use, romance must be restricted by reality. Logicians warn us of the conflict of principles. Religionists need also to remember that enthusiasms conflict. Undeclared wars

between enthusiasms result in forays on vocabularies. In our devotion to a cause or an ideal, we help ourselves to any word that comes in handy. And it never comes more handy than when it has already won its spurs. The greater the word, the greater the temptation to press it into servitude. The liberty we take with the word then serves to enslave it. In time, the word comes to suppress what it was meant to express!

If your mind has survived this test trip to perfection, it may have occurred to you that our talk of the stewardship of prayer, of time, of talents, of matrimony and parenthood, of country and of culture has left much to be desired. The trip may yet land you at a linguistic mourner's bench, there to make, before the Lord and the English language, the delectable confession that, in speaking and writing of stewardship, you "were soon at your wits' end, which was no great journey." To date, we have given the world a *poor* account of *our* stewardship. A famous teacher noticed that, the fewer he talked to, the less he lied. Can it be that if we used the word stewardship less often, it would be easier for us to observe reverence for reality?

II.

Yet when stewardship is used *to the confusion of movements,* incalculably more damage results than when it is used in the confusion of tongues. Then a half truth, or even a whole truth, puts a major truth out of the running. Let us revert to those who wish stewardship to mean *to have in trust.* Their definition is more true to the origin of the word than to the history of the movement. Among them are those who suggest that we sidetrack stewardship in favor of the more modern term, social obligation. The suggestion has a dual motivation. There is the feeling that stewardship has unsavory associations:

"You may break, you may shatter, the vase, if you will,
But the scent of *fanatics* will cling round it still."

One need be no Ferdinand the Bull to tell that the scent of fanatics is unlike the scent of roses. Great words make strange bedfellows, some of whom elude all attempts at delousing or fumigation! Social obligation seems to some to be a term that can take a bath, while stewardship appears irretrievably joined to its idols. There is also the feeling that stewardship carries too churchly an air. It needs to get out into life. Hence the suggestion that we shift gear on words.

An answer is obvious. We cannot put together what reality puts apart. Though stewardship plays a part in social obligation, it is something else—an important something else! Stewardship is no more social obligation than water is river. There is an inherent connection between stewardship and social obligation. But you cannot equate the one with the other; not even to escape the aspersions of a lunatic fringe. To confuse the two is not simply to put stewardship into captivity to social ethic. It is to "hold issues even, that are nothing mated."

Or consider those who say of stewardship that *it is to share.* They rise from social obligation to the higher ground of the social gospel.

They too affirm that we are trustees of civilization. But their good news is happier. They want us to know that we are laborers together with God. Small wonder that so Christian a message beguiles even stewardship authorities into mistaken identification. The social gospel ought we to do, and not to leave stewardship undone. The social gospel itself is a misnomer. There is but one gospel. It is indivisible. If the eternal gospel were not social, what a skimpy gospel it would be! Social gospel, as a term, is a fable verging on a foible. But that which it stands for is not! It represents a message on which the gospels open; one that was implicit in pre-Reformation Protestantism; in the teachings of Calvin and Loyola, and in Wesley's "entire sanctification." But it became explicit only after Marx had inverted Hegelian dialectic for a judgment on capitalism. It contends that all of life must be organized around the will of God revealed in Jesus. The work of the social gospelers is by no means done. It is the task of all of us. And it includes stewardship!

Precisely because we have so large a stake in the social gospel, we should guard against its confusion with stewardship. Once again, the connection is close. "Nobody but an ass," said our communist friend, John Strachey, "believes that the attainment of satisfactory conditions of life would do more than make it possible for men to approach the most intricate and interesting problems of living." You say the truth when you tell us that we have life in trust:

> "Open my eyes to visions girt
> With beauty and with wonder lit —
> But let me always see the dirt,
> And all that spawn and die in it."

You say the truth when you say of life that it is to share.

> "The very founts of love in us
> Will soon be parched and dry,"

unless we let the music of the gospel drown out "the bitter ballad of the slums." But to say that you say the truth in speaking of social obligation or of the social gospel does not mean that you say, or help, the truth when you confuse these with stewardship.

One may make large allowance, however, for those who, with the best of will, define stewardship defectively. It occurred to me to look up the words stewardship and steward in the dictionaries. Turn where you will: to the Oxford English Dictionary, Webster's New International, Funk & Wagnalls' New Standard, nowhere is there given the religious definition of stewardship! There are some semi-religious references to a steward. Webster has its pious moment in quoting I Peter 4:10 "Good stewards of the manifold grace of God." But it uses this only to describe "one who acts as a custodian, administrator or supervisor"! Well along the line Oxford lists "figuratively an administrator and dispenser of wealth," etc., "especially one regarded as the servant of God." Ecclesiastical definitions of Methodist officials, or treasurers of monasteries, appear for the word "steward.' But no religious defination of stewardship anywhere! In the lone instance where it does

appear, it is merely a footnote, with the inane comment: "Steward—see ship." You will recall that in the third edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica (encyclopedias are as conspicuously ignorant of our theme as are the dictionaries), woman was defined as follows: "Woman: female of man—see man." It is as if man could tell you an earful! But when you see ship after steward, as the dictionary asks you to do, you see nothing and see in vain! It gave me glee personally to distribute to the three editors the duncecaps they deserve. But my glee came to be tempered by the reflection that with all our ado about stewardship, we had not attracted attention enough so that a wayfaring man, though a dictionary editor, need not err therein.

Let me repeat what has been said. We are insisting not on priority, but on precision in the use of the word stewardship. We do not say it should be first; we say it should be clear. All definitions are limitations the while they are indications. Major aspects of reality admit of minimum and maximum definitions. We will let two of each outline the domain of stewardship. Not identity in wording but kinship in meaning gives definitions of this sort their worth. No originality is claimed for the observations that follow. They have been expressed by many who have given stewardship the full benefit of their minds. If there is an originality here at all, it will consist of making into major emphases insights heretofore largely uttered in subsidiary fashion.

III.

The two minimum definitions, Christian in reference, may fairly be called humanistic. They are man-centered. One is centered on thought, the other on action. The first was made by a distinguished woman at the annual conference of the United Stewardship Council of the United States and Canada in November, 1937. The other was made offhand by a distinguished theological leader. In fairness to Miss Brimson and Dr. Palmer it should be stated that their definitions were offered, not with the notion of finality, but as contributions to clarity. But the fact that exceptional minds like theirs thought out definitions acceptable enough to be widely used by stewardship authorities, gives them a primary claim to attention.

Miss Brimson defined stewardship "as a consciously accepted philosophy of relationship between God and man which makes for activity for God on the basis of obligation." This definition, it will be noted, is conceptual before it is concrete. It is a philosophy of obligation. To have that philosophy is to have something far superior to a sense of social obligation. Social obligation may be secularly conceived. It often is! The whole drag on the relationship between the church and social agencies revolves around a concept of social work that senses no major need of spiritual activity. Here, then, is stewardship, not as a social obligation, but as a spiritual obligation.

"Jesus paid it all,
All to him I owe"

was an earlier and cruder putting of this philosophy of obligation.

Mark, it is not a consciously accepted philosophy of raising money, if such a philosophy be possible! Yet it does raise money to an infinitely higher level. Stewardship has long been the Cinderella in the household of faith. It was the kitchen slavey, doing the dirty work financially. But when stewardship is our philosophy of obligation, it becomes the princess of the realm. Now money is forthcoming, not grudgingly, or of necessity, but because the relationship to God has been worked out. No longer need there be fear that anyone will

"Bargain for His love, and stand,
Paying a price, at His right hand."

This philosophy of obligation has played an effective part in the stewardship movement. Tens of thousands of pulpits and classes still avail themselves of it. To multitudes it continues to be

"A door to new worlds in the brain;
A window, opening, letting in the light."

The weakness of this definition appears to me to be that it lets philosophy in through the front door, and then sneaks activity in through the cellar window! By thus identifying stewardship with undifferentiated, unmodified activity, it generalizes what ought to be particularized. Once you set activity, footloose and fancy free, among such abnormal activists as most of us are, you let poetic licenses—also prosaic!—go on the spree of their lives. Unless you are going to spread stewardship out so thin that it means everything, and hence nothing, you must hold that the property relation is the the proper relation for stewardship.

This is definitely clear in the second of our minimum and humanistic definitions; "Stewardship is the Christian use of economic advantage." Dr. Palmer's definition is concrete rather than conceptual. It talks of behavior rather than of philosophy. There is power in its brevity. Like Miss Brimson's, it refuses to narrow itself down to social obligation. Its objective is Christian. Unlike Miss Brimson's, it shows the fundamental part economics play in the spirtual process. Insofar as Christian *can* be interpreted in terms of obligation, it covers the whole range of obligation, and not merely social. And though "the Christian use of economic advantage" is in the social gospel, the social gospel is something other than it. In this definition, the naive notion with which the dictionary at best sticks in the mud, that a man who is "an administrator and dispenser of wealth"—who has it to handle and has it to hand out—may be "especially regarded as a servant of God", is contradicted by, or discarded for, the concept that the use of economic advantage, often quite other than administrating and dispensing wealth, is to be Christian throughout. Two weak spots seem to me to lie in this definition. One is the mean advantage which the word advantage gives mortals of our ilk. We are adept at self-deceit. "All sorts and conditions of men" consider themselves at economic disadvantage. Most of us, however much we have, have a tough time of it! Since we have no economic security, we can make neither a Christian nor any other kind of use of it! That is how we rationalize! The second is that this definition fails to direct attention to the deeper and more spiritual fact that stewardship is *also* the Christian use of economic disadvantage,

never more fittingly illustrated than in our Lord who "though rich, became poor, that we might be rich."

IV.

Turn now to two maximum definitions. They may fairly be called theistic. They are God-centered. Like the humanistic, man-centered definitions we have just been considering, the first majors in thought, while the other centers on action. The first is a deliverance of the Oxford Conference. In a phrase, defining rather than mentioning stewardship, it is revealed as "*the true relationship of spiritual and economic goods.*" Once again, let it be noted that the social gospel, which, in effect, was Oxford's entire concern, though saying this in no uncertain tone, is other than stewardship, in that its meaning and message go beyond economics to community, state, school and home. If you ask, Why teach stewardship apart from the social gospel, the answer is, You need not, provided you are skillful enough! But if you mean that stewardship has no right to be taught apart, remember that the social gospel is but a part of the gospel, which is equally true of missions, education, evangelism, churchmanship. These all are taught apart for the sake of emphasis, clarity and effectiveness. There is as yet no impressive evidence that men effective in preaching the social gospel are therefore effective in the presentation of stewardship. No blame attaches to that. The gospel is larger than the greatest of us can proclaim!

The word economics enters into three of the four definitions of which use is made. It is time for the stewardship movement to make up its mind on this point! All great words carry within themselves the seeds of their own undoing. Their meaning may be overshadowed by over-application. Wide is the gate and broad the way that leads language to destruction, and many who speak of stewardship there be that go in thereat. But straight is the gate and narrow the way which leadeth language to life, and few there be that find it—but these few are worth the lot! It is up to the stewardship movement to protect and project the distinctness and directness of the word stewardship. We cannot stand sentinel at every literary or devotional use of the word. But in this major church movement, we ought to keep things clear. There are those who have done this. But more need to do it more. Virtually every major spokesman for the movement, like, yet unlike Marx, in his economic interpretation of history, has made an economic interpretation of stewardship. Hence Oxford truly embodies and apexes the movement when it summons the church to insist on "the true relationship of spiritual and economic goods." We cannot permit an ideal world of spirituality to stand in the way of an actual world of materiality. A thingless religion is a thoughtless religion, and, especially a Christless religion.

This relationship of the spiritual and economic is not manmade. Reality ordains it. It inheres in the nature of things. It is God's doing! "Our human wealth," Oxford goes on to say, "consists of fellowship with God and with our brethren. To this fellowship the whole economic order must be made subservient." Being interpreted, this means that economic goods open or close the door to fellowship! This fact is pecu-

liarly cogent for us pastors. We see much membership, but little partnership in our churches. Partnership in our churches seldom means partnership in *the* Church which is His body; yes, His bride! General Fries said: "The foundation of the Church is the financial ability of its members to support it." His view may alter familiar lines:

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith by what you can afford."

Shall he who pays the piper call the tune? Or is stewardship the lone protection of the church against the inroads of, and control by, finance? For stewardship creates the conviction that "the true relationship of spiritual and economic goods" is fellowship with God; that, so far from being "a dispenser of wealth," a steward seeks to dispense with all wealth that does not result from and in God's fellowship.

Permit me now to proffer a theistic and concrete definition. It comes in two sections, but these twins are one. *Stewardship is the economic result of our religious experience.* This, collectively and concurrently, makes *stewardship the economic expression of Christianity.* You see what this definition does. It roots stewardship, not in an obligation, a behavior, an acknowledgement, a relationship. These all are involved. But it puts first things first. For the crux of the matter is: What is religious experience? What is Christianity? Frankly, if these are what most people have taken them to be, there will be little or no economic expression to or from them! John Kennedy suggests that "the day may yet come when men may prefer communism to Christianity, in so far as communism does less violence to their love of material gain." This is one way of saying, reveal the true nature of Christianity and its popularity will ooze out! What they once hated, they will love; what they once loved, they will hate! This is also one way, and a new way, of saying: Stewardship is the acid test. Suppose one does call mammon Christ? Then the economic results will let the cat out of the bag! Professor Faulkner used to tell us at Drew: "Brethren, if Brother Drew were living today, he would not be starting theological seminaries. Brother Drew would be in jail, brethren!" For Brother Drew was the hardboiled partner of Gould in multiple railroad steals! But he never missed church or prayer meeting if he could help it! Obviously, the economic consequence of what he considered his spiritual experience proved that he had low, and not high religion. Stewardship, then, may be low—the starting of theological schools?—or it may be high. When it is high, it reveals the real nature of Christianity.

Something is given in Christianity. Did I say "something"? Much! All these things the spirit writes on truly awakened hearts; and though He writes more than stewardship, that He writes! Stewardship is the economic consequence of the activity God in Christ carries on in our lives. It is God's enabling act. It is the outward sign of an inward grace. Nothing seems more important for us, just now, than that we shall interpret stewardship in the highest terms possible. That means, in terms of God.

Stewardship as a consciously accepted philosophy of relationship between the divine and the human; as the Christian use of economics;

as the true relationship of spiritual and economic goods, must be climaxed with the insight that our experience of Christ has economic results congenial to the interests and the promotion of the spiritual. Considered on any lower level than that which holds it to be the outcome of the operation of the Spirit of Christ in personality, it is a snare and a delusion. If all it does is to increase collections, the stewardship movement labors like a mountain and brings forth a mouse. Of course, if it does *not* increase the collection, it has utterly failed!

But stewardship is nothing less, and, really, nothing more than God demonstrating in our economic conduct, that Christ is the way, the truth, the life! This is the truth—the great truth—in the popular idea that stewardship is God's way of financing His Kingdom. For if not I live, but Christ liveth in me, I cannot well finance anything else! This is where a spiritual discipline like tithing fits in. When Christ gets his way in our lives, he makes our goods good. From all of which it appears that Christianity has not been experienced much yet. Hence there has been small chance for it to express the presence and love of God irrefutably in economics, where Mammon, despite Calvary, still keeps a strangle hold!

When you talk of stewardship, talk God first and most. Because of His grace in our heart, we have "this grace also." "When they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (showing the influence of the presence of God) "as many as were possessors, laid them" (their economic goods) "at the apostles' feet" (publicly dedicated them to religion). "But Ananias" (who sunk devotion in emotion) "filled his heart to lie to"—the apostles? No, "the Holy Ghost." Always the reference reverts to God. "To keep back part of the price"—he was demonstrating the economic consequence of a devilish experience on which Christian labels had been stuck. "But Peter said . . . You did not lie to men but to God." You may judge the Christianity of a religious experience by its economic outcome. Stewardship holds men up at the point of just one question: *What is the economic result of your spiritual experience?* Does it conclusively prove the reality and desirability of the God Christ lived? Or does it prove that getting gets you: that you are a coin-collecting machine with the shrinking remains of a soul tagging on behind? Well may we pray:

"Live out Thy life within me,
O Jesus, King of Kings!
Be thou thyself the answer
To all my questionings.
Live out Thy life within me,
In all things have Thy way!
I, the transparent medium
Thy glory to display."

The Scope of Stewardship

H. C. Weber

The subject which has been assigned me is "The Scope of Stewardship." The natural tendency in face of such a subject would be closely to define, or if possible, catalog the phases as well as the relevancies of Stewardship.

This is, however, the approach to this subject which I wish to avoid completely. From the days of Jesus, legalism has been the corruption of stewardship. As soon as the tithe or sacrifice or commitment becomes subject to a slide rule or a mental calculation or a meticulous arithmetical process, it loses its redemptive force and ministers to disintegration and death.

In the book of the Revelation there is a beautiful picture of an angel picking up a grass stem, putting it into the hands of a prophet and suggesting to him that he rise up and measure the temple of God and even the altar, together with the people that worship therein. This is an adequate picture of measurement. The grass stem is a very common and easily accessible standard of measurement not burdened with any millimetric complexities. An angel familiar with the language of heaven gives the order, and it is a prophet, a seer of visions, a reader of the future, who is asked to do the measuring of the present.

Some of you will remember the two volumes of stimulating paradox which Gilbert K. Chesterston published a generation ago, one entitled, "Heresy," and a companion volume called, "Orthodoxy." The volume on orthodoxy was very unconventional. You will remember the first three chapters were called, "The Maniac," "The Suicide of Thought," and "The Ethics of Elfland."

In the third chapter on "The Ethics of Elfland,' Mr. Chesterton states that his philosophy, first and last, believed in with unbroken certainty, he had obtained in the nursery. "The things," he writes, "I believed most then, the things I believe most now, are the things called fairy tales. They are not fantasies; compared with them, other things are fantastic. Compared with them religion and rationalism are both abnormal, though religion is abnormally right and rationalism abnormally wrong. Fairyland is nothing but the sunny country of common sense."

He goes on to say: "There is the chivalrous lesson of Jack the Giant Killer; that giants should be killed because they are gigantic. It is a manly mutiny against pride as such. There is the lesson of Cinderella which is the same as that of the Magnificat—*exaltavit humiles.* There is the great lesson of Beauty and the Beast, that a thing must be loved *before* it is lovable. There is the terrible allegory of the Sleeping Beauty which tells how the human creature was blessed with all birthday gifts yet cursed with death; and how death also may perhaps be softened to a sleep."

Back of all these nursery tales is the background of sorcery. I hope you have all seen Mr. Disney's film, "Snow White." In this film there is remarkable skill of line, a wonderful use of color and an astounding force of movement which portrays not only the winsomeness of Snow White, the charm of the dwarfs and the attractiveness of the forest creatures, but just as much, if not more so, the dreadful bewitchment, magic and doom which furnish the background to the story.

It is interesting in this connection to discover that the Metropolitan Museum in New York City has acquired a painting of the vultures who figure in the climax of the story for its permanent collection.

The other great stories of fairyland or of mythology present very much this same picture. There was the beautiful island where the beautiful Circe roamed. All who landed on her delightful strand and were captivated by her alluring charms were changed into animals. You will remember Ulysses' companions were transformed into swine. Back of beautiful shore, beautiful hills, beautiful palace and beautiful princess was sorcery.

How true that is of the age in which we live. The fairy tales are the true tales of today. Back of everything that is beautiful—German music, French art, English democracy and Russian mysticism — is threatening witchcraft, the evil queen compounding her poisoned apples and threatening a living death to fair and winsome civilization.

Whole peoples are in the grasp of the most hideous wizardry. Institutions that have been reaching up to the stars are defiled by paleozoic mud. What the next spell to be cast by the necromancers of today will be, no one knows, but everyone fears. The picture presented by the headlines today prophesies and promises more terrible things than met the heroes and heroines of the old nursery lore.

I.

It is against this picture of the times in which we live that I would like first of all to project the scope of stewardship. An analysis of the nursery tales and the great stories of mythology shows that greed and cupidity are the spell-makers, the magicians. Today it is greed and cupidity that are possessing the minds and the ambitions of world leaders; for these dominant witches, armies are mobilized, poison gas is stored, air armadas are feverishly constructed and barbarities are recklessly planned.

It may seem just as futile to commend stewardship as to visualize a prince's kiss or a glass slipper, or a bean-stalk-climb to break the magic spell, but that is exactly what is in my mind to do. An appeal to the imagination of all who follow Christ to do what His disciples did before they set out to break the Roman bewitchment of civilization. It is not by might nor power, of course, but by the spirit of the Lord, the imagination that can see God in His world and feel Him breaking the spell of the mighty.

In discussing stewardship, therefore, in its scope, let us clearly understand that it has to do not with ten percentums or habits of giv-

ing, or techniques in Christian living. Its scope runs into the world of the imagination where greed and covetousness have their perfect atmosphere. You will remember how Jesus condemned the Pharisees who applied abnormally rationalistic methods to their stewardship understanding. They figured out very meticulously the percentage of weed-seeds from their unproductive acres which they felt should be part of their tithe. Jesus' language concerning them was not overly polite. On the other hand, when He saw the widow, abnormally religious, cast her living into the temple collection box, His own imagination was stirred by the remarkable quality of her courage, and He saw in His imagination centuries approaching in whose halls the picture of the widow and her mite would always glow with glory.

II.

A second suggestion in connection with the scope of stewardship is its relevance to current dominating philosophies of government. Enormous tension has been produced in Christian thought by the recent emergence of extremely secular and pagan theories and techniques of government. These have been institutionalized on an unheard of scale. The strain which they have produced on organized religion, both Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox, has been terrific. They have produced corruption, disintegration and heroism. The strain has been marked even in countries where these theories of government have as yet not prevailed.

An appraisal in organized religion is being intensely conducted in many directions. The survival value of Christianity is being appraised. The disorganization and inner tensions of Christianity are being desperately studied. The follies and errors of the past are assuming importance as it is discovered that they throw light on present disabilities.

The terrible way in which, for example, the Marxian movement was handled by the Continental Churches just a hundred years ago, appears in its true light today.

Stewardship appears to be that section of the philosophy of religion which can measure itself with the totalitarian philosophies of government. The scope of stewardship, therefore, seems to be the gigantic one of opposing in the name of Christ the anti-Christ forces of current history.

The reasoning is simple enough. Totalitarianism, in what is called the State, though it may be the field of a dictator, tyrant or oligarchy, is in a sense a stewardship of the secular type. Mr. Stalin and the rest of the dictators claim that they hold in trust their power for the benefit of the race, nation, empire or class which they represent. Their stewardship demands three things — first, commitment; second, sacrifice; and third, complete submission. In view of the well-being of the selected group, things assume a subordinate place. Bread can be doled out, luxuries can be forbidden, and individual rights can be completely abolished.

There is a totalitarianism in Christianity which has never been recognized by His followers. It is also based on commitment and sacrifice. It is admirably visualized for us in the story of the wayside encounter of Jesus with the rich young ruler. He was asked to commit himself to the cross, to sacrifice his entire riches. He was, however, not asked by a dictator-Christ to submit himself on penalty of a concentration camp or exile. There was no force pictured in the story as being behind the sacrifice and commitment. Love was the motivation for these things. He was called not to *obedience* to Jesus, but to *companionship* with Him. "Come follow me."

However much we may recognize the power of the totalitarianisms to win the imagination of youth into service and commitment, one thing stands out as decisive as to their future. Their vital principle is so basically corrupt that it cannot bring the salvation it promises. In the end their issue must be some form of destruction. At first sight the German desire for a place in the sun, for the return of colonies, for the reestablishment of the pride of a defeated people, seems a high aim. Japan's reputed urge to bring peace and well-being to a graft-ridden, war lord-controlled and low-subsistence-level nation like China, seems to be commendable.

But these rationalizations are definitely built about the importance of possessions and are shot through and through with cupidity. The choice has always been the same. However much phraseologies or verbal rationalizations have differed, the word of God puts it unmistakably and succinctly: Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

The great weakness of the totalitarianisms is that they have substituted national for personal cupidity. But cupidity and greed from the Christian point of view are a weakness, corrupting and deadly. The totalitarianisms have it on a grand scale, so grand that it may well prove fatal to civilization itself. Greed when implemented by mortgages, writs, clearing houses, market manipulations, footpads, sneak thieves, racketeers, corporation charters, labor union rules, is bad enough. But when it can command armies, navies, air squadrons, high explosives, poison gas, radio, propaganda, it is infinitely more dangerous.

This is the picture which confronts us today. Within this turbulence, and surrounded by this murkiness, the institution of the Christian religion is found trying to hold its place and function as the goodwill focus of the divine thought for the human race.

Stewardship is that phase of Christianity which comes to grips with greed. It casts things and possessions out of the center of attention and puts God there. This is the essence of stewardship, and makes it that one phase of Christian philosophy which is ready at hand in the struggle with organized greed.

If stewardship can be emphasized almost to the point of pre-occupation by the Church of Christ, the battle may be confidently won. During the last century while organized religion was in its pioneering stages on the North American continent, the great emphasis of the Church was on revival evangelism. That emphasis has faded. The emphasis on

stewardship, that is to say, the Christian's relationship to possessions, and the Church's relation to possessions as well, may be the desirable and victorious twentieth century concern of all of organized religion. This emphasis outlines the colossal scope which we venture to suggest for the study and the thoughtful consideration of this conference.

III.

With this background in our minds, it may be well for us to turn to a hurried view of the foreground of stewardship, its scope in common and diverse phases of personal and church life. These relevancies assume far greater importance if we apprehend distinctly that they are phases of an immense movement. The way, for example, in which our church programs are supported may be seen to be very important. It is possible to argue with some plausibility that the disabilities of a number of great national Christian churches have been influenced by methods of money raising or money receiving.

Thoughtful bishops and archbishops in the Roman Catholic Church in the United States have been made uneasy by the gambling methods which have brought an element of corruption into parish life. It is a grave question how far organized religion that receives its support from a secular state can bear witness to the truths and the spirit of the Gospel.

Church officers who are more concerned to raise money to pay the bills of a congregation than they are about the giving habits or lack of habits of church members, contribute an element of deterioration and not of service to their church's life. Pastors who "never mention money from the pulpit" are broken reeds or very uncertain sounding trumpets in the Kingdom. The routine of the offertory, the "passing of the hat," the begging note in asking people to contribute of their surplus cash, the exploitation of patrons or rich people in deficit-financing in churches, and the pressure that is brought in a secular way on people to meet the expenses of the churches, all need the most spiritual valuation. We must never forget that in the first every member canvass which was held in the Apostolic Church, great grace was manifested but death also entered through Ananias and Sapphira, and this juxtaposition, not quite so visible and shocking, is probably a common, if not an inevitable one today in the average canvass of the modern church.

With this background the personal aspects of stewardship become intelligible and important. The question of tithing assumes its proper place. This place is subordinate but it is part of an enormously impressive whole. As an index of commitment, tithing or proportionate giving, becomes sacramental. It should be lifted out of the atmosphere of obligation or of commandment, or of need. It belongs in the atmosphere of grace and love.

Some people think that the tithe buys something or forefends something, or assures something. It does just one very important thing. It expresses something, and that something is a commitment so glorious and so satisfying that all constraint, all compulsion and even all computation vanish.

I think this was what St. Paul had in mind when he wrote those words to his friends in Corinth, "Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful (or hilarious) giver."

Many of the difficulties which people find in determining what they shall do with their possessions, to what extent they shall give, lie in the importance which they attribute to their income or their means. When the rich young ruler found that his possessions for the time being at least, would keep him from centering his life in Christ, the disciples were profoundly disturbed, and rightly so. They said, "How can anybody with money get into the Kingdom?" But Jesus said to them, With God it is possible. The solution is to put God at the center and let Him decide.

Peter raised a natural question at once, and one of profound importance to all of us Christian people today. He said, how about us poor folks who have given up a good deal? Jesus said: You have obtained a thousandfold, for God will not only overbalance but include all of these desirabilities. The specific still is, Seek ye first the kingdom, and then other things will be added.

The scope of stewardship ranges far beyond what is suggested by many of the definitions which have been in common use. It gets into the pattern or into the imagination which God Almighty has for His creatures who love Him. It stands in the way of the pagan thought and the greedy philosophy of man which today threatens to plunge civilization into undreamed-of terror. It fits itself to the common-place, the habit, the phraseology of everyday Christian living and there brings its clear and happy consciousness of the presence of Christ and His redemption.

Stewardship in the Local Church

(This discussion took place on Wednesday morning, March 8, 1939, Mrs. H. T. Thompson, presiding, with the Rev. C. O. Hawley, President of the United Stewardship Council, conducting the Panel.)

MRS. THOMPSON: Those who are studying stewardship and its principles are always faced with the objection, It is so nebulous and theoretical. I hope by the time we get through this discussion, everyone will feel that stewardship is something substantial and solid, right here, and that we can do something about it. I have pleasure in asking Dr. Hawley, of Indianapolis, Ind., to take charge of the panel discussion.

DR. HAWLEY: I will introduce the group, Madam Chairman, and as I call their names, will they please come to the platform. Miss Doris Dennison, of the Board of Christian Education, Methodist Episcopal Church; Dr. Harry S. Myers, Northern Baptist Convention, and Secretary of the Council; Rev. H. S. Minnich, of the Church of the Brethren, Elgin, Ill.; Rev. B. K. Tenney, of the Southern Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, Ga.; Rev. S. M. Lindsay, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Cincinnati, O.; Rev. John M. Versteeg, Methodist Episcopal preacher, Cincinnati, O.

(Other members of the Council in attendance were introduced and rose in their seats.)

DR. HAWLEY: If I had a blackboard before me I would draw three circles. In the first circle I would write, United Stewardship Council. In the second, Toronto Conference, and in the third, the local church.

Our efforts will fail unless the things that are being thought out and discussed in the Council reach the Conference, and the message of the Conference reaches the local church. We will ask Miss Dennison to speak briefly on Dramatizing and Teaching Stewardship.

MISS DENNISON: The cultivation of Christian stewardship means leading persons to the sharing way of life, God's way. How can we cultivate Christian stewards *through drama and through teaching?* In selecting stewardship plays we want to be sure we have truly religious plays, those which lead people to a closer fellowship with God and exalt them in spirit. We have been making a study of such plays in the Council and will list them for Stewardship Year, 1940. Miss Bates in her recent book on drama, gives some qualifications for religious drama. It should have a high and noble seriousness, with freedom from theological distinctions, from traditions that bind, and from religious didacticism. There may be dogma, but only the great dogma of redemption, wider and fairer than has yet been dreamt, and the drama of wonder. It should be elemental. While austere, it should also have emotional richness. It should have something of the secret that goes into the saving of a soul.

In planning religious drama we need to think of the skill of the

director and of carelessness in costuming, setting, properties and performers. Prof. Eastman in one of his books has a chapter on how to kill religious drama by shoving it off on the children, or turning it over to the choir leader, or picking non-royalty plays.

However, there is value in unwritten dramatization, in helping children interpret stewardship lessons and guiding them in their interpretation. Lesson materials, teacher-training classes, summer camps or conferences, church schools and the Christian home, provide rich opportunities for promoting stewardship. For these opportunities guides are available. The International Council of Religious Education has a course for teachers of teachers, entitled Christian Stewardship. Some problems dealt with are the relationship of stewardship to life as a whole, its relationship to spending and earning money, its bearing as a trust from God and its effect on a community.

There is a great opportunity for Christian parents in the home to teach the stewardship of time, budgeting, sharing, etc. The Council has been studying available material provided by its constituent denominations and a tentative list of courses is available.

Dr. Myers: My topic is *Visualizing Stewardship.* How not to do it is what I will do, talk instead of show. First, in the foyer is an exhibit of stewardship literature. Not only literature but also objects may be used to illustrate phases of stewardship. Second, charts are valuable. Dr. Weber prepared a pamphlet last year containing thirty charts, which have had a great influence. The pamphlet costs twenty-five cents. Its charts have been enlarged, a set costing $4.50. Many sets are in circulation. Other charts have been made available and are growingly helpful. Third, posters are valuable. Some are displayed in the lobby. Fourth, motion pictures have been suggested. The Council is discussing the production of films and hopes that this resource may be available in 1940. Fifth, slides have been much used. Dr. Weber's charts have been made into lantern slides and some denominations have lectures which have been heard and seen by more than a million people.

Rev. H. S. Minnich: The *Essay and Poster Plan* provides a process of learning in the local church for children and youth. Stewardship is so much a part of the Bible that it cannot be escaped, and yet I feel that certain truths about it have to have a lift-up to get them really established in the life of youth. I remember in my own life there was a certain book at a certain age which stirred my missionary aspirations. The Evangelical and Reformed Church has used this plan for seventeen consecutive years for the training of youth. Packets are provided for different age groups, beginning with age nine. Essays are limited to three or four hundred words. Subjects are assigned the age groups. For example, the current subject for age 12-14 is, How Christian boys and girls get spending money; for the next group, The Christian way of making a budget and living up to it. For the adult group, the subject is, The Family Budget of Christian stewards. Even if your denomination does not conduct a contest, your own church may find it practicable and helpful.

Dr. B. K. Tenney: My subject is *Proportionate Giving.* I am go-

ing to speak primarily of tithing. Our approach to it ought to be to make people want to do it. I did not want to chop wood when I started as a boy on the farm. My father, however, had a way of leading me into it and gradually I began to realize somebody had to chop wood. After a while I did it of my own volition. Our approach to tithing ought also to be prompted by the love we have for Christ.

There are other things I would like to say: First, tithing is an acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God and His ownership. We should make this acknowledgment not grudgingly but gladly. It means more to the son of God to be able to use God's things for God's purposes than if the things were his own and he were using them for his purposes. Our setting aside a tenth is an acknowledgment in another direction, to ourselves. People write about their primary needs, shelter, food and clothing. Tithing adds God to the list of primary needs. Man cannot live by bread alone. It is necessary to give God a place in our lives.

Second, there is a law of the tithe. Law is a harsh word. We think of it as something which cramps our style. It is all right for me to drive beyond the speed limit because I drive carefully! The law was made for others not so careful as I am! But the law really was made, faulty as it is, to enable us all to live together without interference one with the other. God's law is made for a more abundant life, not to hamper and cripple. Tithing helps us live better together.

Third, does tithing pay? So often tithing literature suggests that if we tithe, our income will be increased at once. This may be true but the real payment is the blessing that comes from God. Our business is to build a soul for God, fit and ready for eternity. It is not a matter of how big a house we live in, but how big a soul we have. I believe tithing helps that.

Rev. S. M. Lindsay: In discussing the subject of *Publicity and the Press,* I think we should stress the importance of cooperating with the newspapers in reporting life in which the Church is the major part of everything. If a man is too busy to see representatives of the press, or too busy to pray, he is just *too* busy. The secular press furnishes great opportunities for publicity. So does the religious press. Our own church papers have pitifully small circulation among church members. One religious body with a membership of 165,000 reported to me a circulation of 35,000 weekly for their magazine. Their per capita giving was the highest. In addition to newspaper and church paper publicity, we have the radio and the movie. It might be a good parish project to have the young people prepare simple movies on stewardship. In Southern Ohio we made three inexpensive films on the Healing and the Teaching Church. They cost only about $25 a film. It might be possible for denominations to get together in a community, to use newspapers cooperatively and to link up, not only good church members, but outsiders as well who are profiting by the religious life of the community.

Miss Dennison (speaking for Mrs. Duguid, absent because of illness): It is important to develop *Stewardship Among Our Women* in such a way that there is joy in sharing. Some possible ways of carrying our program to women are through drama and through reading. Women

have a pretty hard and busy day in the home and ought to be able to sit down and read short pamphlets on stewardship, so these are valuable. Business and professional women are interested in personal budgeting and stewardship leaders can help them personally or by printed matter. This approach is being tried out by the Western Service Guild of the Methodist Church. We have developed suggestions on how to be a Christian budgeteer, thinking out shares in the Christian program with finances, with the same seriousness of purpose we have been giving to other items essential to maintenance, such as housing, food and clothing.

Dr. Versteeg: Some time ago I was conducting a conference of laymen and officials. I asked them to report on a questionnaire what they were most interested in. Stewardship was fifth. No one was most interested in that subject. How can we make it a live topic? The preaching of *"Stewardship Sermons"* is not really preaching stewardship; it must come into virtually every sermon. Recently I preached a sermon on personality, with the subject, "What I know about you." I made the point that personality is the capacity for fellowship. You cannot achieve fellowship without stewardship, that is to say, things must not be permitted to stand in the way. Any preacher who takes stewardship seriously will build up a wealth of illustrations. A church in Chicago called on me for a stewardship sermon. A man spoke to me the next day. He had heard the sermon. He told of how he had once gone to church with his wife and gotten mad at the preacher because he was told what to do with his money. However, he and his wife started to study about it. Eventually they determined they would share their money with God. The man said, "I come down to my office of a morning and say to myself, Well, thank God, I no longer come down here to make money for myself, but to make money for my great Partner."

Dr. Hawley: We have come now to the question period. Written questions will be collected and answered by different Council members who are available. Question 1: What stewardship books do you suggest?

Dr. Myers: Dr. Weber has a book called, "The Horizons of Stewardship" (Revell), on display in the foyer; Dr. Simpson has a book just out, "This World's Goods" (Revell); and the Council has asked Dr. Versteeg, who wrote the widely popular book, "Perpetuating Pentecost" some years ago, to produce the main source-book for the Stewardship Year, 1940. He proposes to call it "Perpetuating the Widow's Might."

Dr. Hawley: Another question: *"When is Stewardship Year?"*

Dr. Myers: The year 1940, either the calendar year, beginning January 1, or ecclesiastical years beginning some time in 1940 and running over into 1941. About 20 denominations have already approved this year of emphasis.

Dr. Hawley: Here is a question, Miss Dennison, What is the *Stewardship Spokesman?*

Miss Dennison: It is a quarterly publication of the Board of Education, M. E. Church, 740 Rush Street, Chicago, Ill., devoted to stewardship education, subscription price 35 cents a year.

Dr. Hawley: Some one wants to know about electrical transcriptions used in radio work. Can they be used in the local group, Mr. Lindsay?

Mr. Lindsay: Yes, decidedly so. A good transcription can be readily used by local radio stations. Consult your denominational headquarters. They may have such transcriptions or they may be led to produce them.

Dr. Hawley: Here is a question addressed to Dr. Weber: What about the ethics of offering prizes in contests in the local church?

Dr. Weber: Overemphasis on prizes is always bad, of course, but a pressing on to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus—which is the object of the contest—seems to me rather desirable.

Dr Hawley: Here is a question, Is expository preaching the best for stewardship, Dr. Meyer?

Dr. Meyer: Yes and no. Yes, in the sense that it gives stewardship a sound and substantial background. No, in the sense that a topical approach affords greater latitude of expression and practical application.

Dr. Hawley: I have a question addressed to Dr. Weber. Will he please develop his thought of last night of imagination in stewardship a little further?

Dr. Weber: The question should be about stewardship as the gateway into imagination, and not of imagination as the approach to stewardship. Just beyond our sight lies the great supernatural world, God's imagination, for example, for us. Jesus said—certainly using His imagination—ye are the salt of the earth, ye are the light of the world. I have a side-line, statistics. They lead me into a great world of the imagination. Wherever the veil of that world is lifted for a moment, as in the Book of Revelation, I see a man or an angel or a prophet measuring or counting, and what is more to a statistician's ecstasy, measuring absolutely perfect dimensions. Preachers will not find any pulpit in heaven but statisticians will truly be in Paradise!

This is a feeble illustration of what I meant last night. Stewardship lifts the veil to a new world. We call it a world of imagination—it is God's imagination.

Dr. Hawley: How can stewardshp be taught without stressing the thought of reward? Dr. Tenney.

Dr. Tenney: Stress some other thought. It seems to me we can remember that God does things in a very big way right along the line. Does it not make life mean more to us if we can relate God's purpose and God's work to every day things? God said when He created man, let man have dominion. It is our business to control the things of God's world. Just as a man ploughs his field, not thinking anything miraculous is involved—at least I did not when I was ploughing—yet so he relates God's will to his every day work, even to the commonplace.

Dr. Versteeg: You get stewardship wrong unless you relate it to religious experience. If you think of miraculous rewards in terms of money, you are wrong. God's gift to us is Himself.

Dr. Hawley: Dr. Gregory, will you answer this question? Has not the steward an obligation to carry the Gospel to those who do not usually frequent the church?

Dr. Gregory: I remember Jesus' insistence that His disciples after the Holy Spirit had come upon them, should bear witness that they were His witnesses. There should be no hesitation about witnessing to the values which come out of Christian stewardship.

Dr. Hawley: Here is a question, Dr. Minnich, about the preacher of a church with a hundred members or less. How can we reach him and help him cooperate in support of the whole denominational program?

Dr. Minnich: That is a big order. I happen to be secretary who sends out a lot of plans. When a preacher says honestly, I have no facilities to do all those things, I agree with him . . . I expect him to take a favoring attitude, however, to fulfill as much as good judgment suggests.

Dr. Hawley: Someone asks that Dr. Weber add a word.

Dr. Weber: I have enormous sympathy for the man who has no resources, no personnel and no freedom from burdensome church-housekeeping details. But such a pastor has an assistant who is entirely capable of handling the important things, and that is the Lord Christ Himself. I can speak authoritatively and with realism in my own field, the every member canvass. I have seen quite average preachers, in hard fields, invite the Master to stand in the pulpit or behind the communion table to put on the canvass, and extraordinary success has come. There is some way, I am sure, to tap this power for all the problems and perhaps for the programs the secretaries are always sending out. If there are any discouraged pastors here, we are trying to help you see and tie up with Jesus to get the words and the works of His life over to your people.

Dr. Hawley: The small church may be the biggest church in the world if it is harnessed to the Eternal God. We have one more question, Dr. Myers. What would you recommend as the best follow-up for this conference?

Dr. Myers: We represent three different groups here. Some of us hold denominational positions, some have district and probably more than half of the several hundreds here have only local church responsibilities. But all our programs should be focussed on the local church under each type of responsibility. Everything that has already been brought out here and that will be brought out later, should help through us in building the educational and financial program of the local church. This is a continuing task. It cannot be done tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. The answers we have had, I think, imply a process that may take years.

Experiences in Stewardship Promotion

JOHN E. SIMPSON

A number of years ago in Ireland, a home guard was being formed. A member was asked, "What are you going to do?" "Well," said he, "we are going to get guns pretty soon." "But what are you going to do then?" "We are going to get uniforms." "Yes, but what are you going to do then?" We are going to drill." "But what are you going to do then?" Pat studied a few moments and said, "I guess we'll get our pictures took."

The purpose of this great gathering is not to get pictures or impressions but to get strength and purpose to go back home and work for Christ and His Kingdom. There was a time when the Master took three disciples to a mountain top. They had a great experience. You remember that Simon Peter wanted to pass a motion about building tabernacles and staying there, but that motion was never put. Christ led them down to the foot of the mountain where was a demoniac lad and beyond him multitudes who did not know their right hand from their left, spiritually.

I think that is somewhat the purpose of our great gathering here. Before the depression we were able to do a pretty good job of financing the Church and its enterprises out of surplus. That was done very largely when we were content to a large degree to accept the situation and go forward as well as we could. Then came the depression. The surplus of the average individual was wiped out and our financial system to a large degree was impaired. The question came at once, What were we going to do?

First of all, let us not rebuild the structure that has been demolished. Let us build a better one. We must go down beneath selfishness, greed and covetousness. We must dig them up and haul them away. We do not dare build on slime. We must dig down deep to eternal and bedrock realities.

There are many Christians today in the grip of a very crass materialism. In one of his pamphlets, Dr. Jowett reports going to see a banker and pleading with him on behalf of a great cause. The banker said, "But I cannot give. I simply do not have it." And then he said with all seriousness, "Dr. Jowett, I do not know what we business men are coming to, with all the demands made upon us." Two months later that man's will was probated for 60 million dollars,—a great sum and yet the man who had it, worrying because he was asked to give to a great and worthy cause.

Life today is so largely buried under things. George Bernard Shaw said recently that there are two classes of people, those in insane institutions and those who have not been examined as yet! But George Bernard Shaw also said this: "That man is a gentleman who puts more

into life than he takes out of it." The banker could have thought of his money as a source of life waiting to be released.

Every new pay check, someone has said, is a new era. Through it God's ownership may be recognized or flouted. A young lad one day showed his companions a twenty dollar gold piece. One of them said, I bet it isn't yours. He said, It is mine. Another said, It isn't really and truly yours. The little fellow said, Yes, it is really and truly mine but it belongs to my father.

I.

We need to plan ahead. Stewardship is not an overnight mushroom growth. It is like the oak or sequoia which requires years and years to grow. So teaching stewardship is important. There is just one thing wrong with a church of a hundred members, or ten, or many more, if it is not interested in stewardship and that is the minister. A man said to me once, Simpson, I can't be bothered with these things. I never was born to monkey with these things. I looked him in the eye and in all seriousness, replied, But you can be born again.

Here is my own personal experience. I went to a little frame church that had a mortgage of $7,000. It had no heating plant of any value. It had no credit and owed $36 in water rates alone. We began to talk and preach stewardship. The first day I preached, the offering was $9. I remember well the day it rose to $13. When we dedicated our new church, it was $3,600 in cash. The annual income rose from $2,700 to $26,000 in ten years. The offerings for missions increased from $316 to $3,363 so the church could take on a missionary family. Ninety-eight per cent of the membership was pledged. The per capita of giving rose from fourteen to sixty-seven dollars though only one family had an income of as much as $5,000 a year.

In fifteen years the church received 1003 new members. Perhaps the reason why so many churches are small, both in membership and finances, is because they have not been challenged by a stewardship program commensurate with the business ability, intellectual power and acumen of the men in the church.

II.

We ought to begin with the young. One of the great child psychologists says that the average infant of two years is as selfish as a bear cub. In two years, selfishness is pretty fully developed. Well, if selfishness and covetousness begin early we ought to begin to anodize that by teaching sharing and giving. We need stewardship stories for the younger age-groups. We need more courses on stewardship. We are waiting for someone to give us material to pass on to our boys and girls. One of the most telling ways of teaching stewardship is to give children an award of some sort for work and reading in this area. Why not circulate books, leaving signatures on the back pages of those able to affirm, I have read this book.

Stewardship study classes are most valuable. A very small church at Rock Island, Ill., had a banquet at the close of a stewardship study course, each chapter being reviewed by a young person. The reviews were so fine that the entire congregation was invited to hear them again.

Stewardship should be visualized in posters, charts and illustrated printing. The new offset printing is especially fine for this purpose. It is possible to include pictures, drawings and odd cuts with very little expense.

III.

It is important to put all appeals in terms not of dollars and drives, but of service. This strengthens the appeal. Nobody is thrilled to pay a preacher's salary but to provide a ministry to the community is something desirable. To pay a janitor is one thing, to provide for our own comfort is quite another. It is even possible to provide for income when one is gone, through will-writing. For $50 a year a young man can underwrite as much as $2,000. In my own church at the present time, we have some $19,000, arranged for through annuities, promissory notes and memorials.

IV.

Another way of promoting stewardship is by preaching. The Scriptures are full of it, verses and parables. I cannot but think of the communion in this connection, especially the text, "I will take the cup of salvation . . . and pay my pledge." (Ps. 116:13) A few years ago a young preacher came to me to ask me to find him another church. I said, "What is wrong?" "Well," said he, "I have a wife and five children and I can't live on the salary the church is willing to pay." Knowing the church, I said, "Have you talked it over with the trustees?" Quick as a flash, he replied, "Absolutely not. I have made it a point in my ministry not to mention money in the church or to my officials." I said, "My heart bleeds for your wife and children, but you ought to starve."

Tom had a unique gospel all his own, not four square, but three square. And then he wondered why his salary was so small, and why the work lagged. He went home and called his officers together and talked to them about money. They said, "Why haven't you told us this before? We thought everything was all right." And one of them said, "We would like to have some stewardship preaching." Tom has been in that church for fifteen years and writes, "John, I still have you on my prayer list for that insult you gave me!"

God has a plan for our giving. In the Old Testament it was tithes and offerings. In the New Testament it is tithes and offerings. The great argument for tithing it seems to me, is in the seventh chapter of Hebrews where tithes are spoken of eight times in nine verses. The climax comes when the statement is made that Christ has become a priest like Melchizedek, receiving tithes, by the power of an indissoluble life and not by the law of an external command (Heb. 7:16). If, how-

ever, you do not agree with me, preach your own conviction of the plan which God has for his Church with regard to the stewardship of possessions.

It costs to preach stewardship. A colored brother faced the problem of closing his church; practically all of his people were on relief. They were receiving a pound of butter, with other things, from a welfare board. The pastor made arrangements with a grocer to give cash instead of butter and from this sacrifice they paid for coal and light for their church. They gave up butter for their bread that they might have the bread of life.

Hast thou plenty? Then rejoice,
Rejoice and freely share.
Hast thou scanty store? E'en then
A little thou can'st spare.
Be the portion great or small
The loving generous heart
Will always find it large enough
To give away a part.

V.

Yes, religion costs. It cost God His Son. It cost Christ His life. If it does not cost anything, it is not Christianity. There are five planes on which we put Christ's program. First, the tip-plane, changing a dime to get a nickel to put on the plate. Second, the amusement-plane. One man in Washington, D. C., sent in his pledge of five dollars a week "When I come." Third, the false-promise plane, like Ananias and Sapphira, who lied to the spirit and died. I wonder if people have stronger constitutions today. Fourth, the business-plane, like the man in Chicago who was kept from going to the foreign field but put in his letterheads, "selling doughnuts for God" and supported 26 missionaries. Fifth, the love-plane, in New York recently a young woman went to a Communist meeting for high school youth. One lad attracted her notice. His feet were almost unshod. She offered to buy him a pair of shoes. But he said, Madam, I have money to buy shoes but how can I spend money on myself when these kids need our communist literature so badly?

If we could only catch the fire of stewardship as that lad had interest in communism, what could we not do for Jesus Christ!

Exchange of Experience

(At the afternoon session on Wednesday, a period was alloted for the exchange of experience in the promotion of stewardship in the local church. Dr. Hawley took charge of this period and the audience contributed freely to the discussion.)

DR. HAWLEY: I think in a few minutes a number of people can present their experiences in trying to lift the level of giving through the encouragement of stewardship in the local church. Mr. McKnight is called for. Is he here?

MR. MCKNIGHT: I happen to be the pastor of a mission church near Buffalo. When it was established in 1927, it adopted as its policy the principle of stewardship. There were to be no dinners, bazaars or anything of that type, to raise money. After a few years we built a new building and acquired a debt. A number of people who came into the church did not have the same view of finances as the founders and so there was strong demand for establishing other methods of raising money more quickly. The bars were let down. To the surprise and discomfiture of the ones who suggested this, the church went farther and farther behind in paying its bills. After two years we were $3,000 behind in current bills and had not touched our indebtedness. We were led to return to our original policy. I preached a series of sermons on Christian stewardship and at a congregational meeting it was decided to return to the policy of stewardship. This was just before the annual canvass. In it pledges rose from $300 to $800 and since they have gone to $3,000. The pledges to local work increased about 70 per cent. The actual receipts both for missions and for local work have exceeded the pledges. Our membership has increased rapidly. We find a distinct relationship between the stewardship policy and the evangelistic fervor and devotional life of the congregation. I recommend Christian stewardship to you.

DR. HAWLEY: I have a suggestion that a Mr. Craig has had an experience he may be willing to share with us. Mr. Craig?

MR. CRAIG: I do not know just how to begin except to say I have been trying to practice tithing for some time and I preach stewardship. A year ago last June I called together my official board and presented the matter of tithing to them. We found that the men of money are the slowest to tithe and that it is usually the man with the smaller income and very frequently the widow and the working girl who the more readily set aside a tenth for the Lord. We did succeed in getting some fifty people to tithe out of a membership of about 700. It is very interesting to know that after a year and a half, these tithers appear to be contributing more in their envelopes than all the rest of our members combined.

DR. HAWLEY: There is a note of reality in such a testimony which we need. I wonder if Dr. Tenney could tell us about the Belmont Plan

which has been used to such good purpose in the Southern Presbyterian churches?

Dr. Tenney: I wish Mr. Whitely, who originated this plan, were here to speak about it. He was pastor of the Belmont Presbyterian Church, in Roanoke, Va. The church is in the middle-class section of town. Most of its members were employees in mills. With a building debt of $15,000, $2,600 of unpaid bills, and many members out of work, the church faced a very serious problem in 1933. A spirit of defeatism and pessimism was creeping over the congregation. Some were even saying, "We cannot carry on; the debt is too heavy."

The pastor, however, had a vision. He asked the church members to report on unsigned slips of paper, anonymously, what their actual income was. Of 425 members, 137 had a definite dependable income, averaging $18 a week. The pastor's vision was that these members might tithe, as stewards.

To the challenge, 118 out of the 137 responded, and for a period of three months, from September 17 to December 24, 1933, gave a tenth of their income to the church. The offerings rose from fifty dollars a week to two hundred and twenty-eight. One Sunday they reached $450.

All bills were paid by the end of the year; the bank had very cheerfully refinanced the indebtedness, the necessary pay-up having been made, and there was a balance of two cents in the treasury. Best of all was the canvass which followed which was oversubscribed by two thousand dollars.

I had the privilege of preaching in that church a while ago. I preached the best sermon on stewardship I could. After I had finished the pastor gave the men of the congregation an opportunity to talk to me. I cannot tell you how much what they said meant to me. I got many new ideas.

We have emphasized the Belmont Plan in the Southern Presbyterian churches. About 430 have used it. In some cases where it was put on without preparation, it never got very far. In others, the results were well worth while.

Mr. Whitely emphasized two points. One was the limited period of tithing. It makes it easier to put over, but some people will continue as tithers. The other was tithing for a definite purpose in the Kingdom. The success of the project helps.

Dr. Hawley: Here is a question, Dr. Tenney, about a man receiving say $1,000 wages. Should he give $100 through his church?

Dr. Tenney: As we see it, he might give 70 or 80 per cent through his church and the rest through other channels. Or he might give the tithe, "into the storehouse" and meet other emergencies by additional giving.

Dr. Hawley: A gentleman wants to know if any large number of members in the churches using the Belmont Plan continued as tithers?

Dr. Tenney: Yes, certainly; in Mr. Whitely's church a very large number are keeping up with their tithing.

Dr. Hawley: I would like to report that in the Disciples Church we have for the third year been promoting a period of tithing from Easter to Pentecost. Is Easter an end or a beginning? We say, a beginning of greater consecration. About fifteen or twenty per cent of the people who try tithing in this period continue. Some one wants to know about the farmer's tithe, Dr. Tenney.

Dr. Tenney: I was brought up on a farm. The question is harder for the farmer than for a man who gets a straight salary. Some of our farmer tithers say tithing helps them tremendously because they have to keep accounts. Certainly farmers might tithe milk and eggs and other things, or the money crop, whatever it is. In my country it is cotton, and there I think the farmer would not deduct his cotton expenses. Some set aside a tenth of their acreage.

Dr. Hawley: Is there someone with a word about the Lord's Acre Plan?

Dr. Williams: I may be able to say a word about that. Here in Canada we did not like the name, Lord's Acre. We called it the Lord's Portion Plan. We sent out some literature explaining the plan. The first year we had some difficulties. People could not sell what they raised, so they sent it in to us. I had to get a store-room in the city to take care of the potatoes, the carrots, the syrup and all the other stuff that was shipped in. I was even offered a horse and a cow. However, we managed to sell all that came in and those who sent it reported that they had been able to raise more money than before.

Dr. Hawley: With the emphasis we have been laying on tithing, some may feel that it is just a method of raising money. A tithing program goes much deeper than finances. It means an enlistment of persons. If anything is really going to get into the life of the congregation, the pulpit has the responsible place. There must be a definite place for stewardship in the preaching program. One pastor, a classmate of mine, in Kansas, has been preaching one sermon a month on stewardship from the beginning of his long and successful pastorates. Sometimes the pulpit is fearful and delicate about presenting Christian stewardship. A reproof is in order if such is the case, like the one given a pastor in Louisville, Ky., who went before his church board one day and said, Now, gentlemen, I am going to protect you from additional calls for money. The wealthiest man on his board said, Now, Doctor, you know we love you, but whoever appointed you to be our bodyguard from good appeals?

I thank you, friends, for your patience. We have spent about two hours and a half, in discussing stewardship experiences. I believe that our relationship to things is a basic matter in Christianity. If our profession does not find expression in the way we use our possessions, our faith in Christ and our relationship to His Church is in danger. So after all, the work of stewardship is indeed a work of evangelism. It is an effort to win persons, with the winning of funds, incidental.

The Stewardship Approach to Religious Experience

Bishop Ralph S. Cushman

The text which I wish to give you tonight is to me the greatest promise in the New Testament. In Saint John 14:21 is found this promise of Jesus: "And I will love him and manifest myself to him."

Life is worth while, dear God,
To those who know
    This rich companionship with Thee;
Each morning as the day flames forth,
    Each evening in a sweet tranquility.

Ten million million gifts
Spring from Thy hand,
    Of up-flung mountains, evening skies, a tree!
Yet never one can quite compare with this —
    The giving of Thyself to me!

If I am interested in Christian stewardship, my friends, it is not merely because of my desire to defend certain teachings of the scriptures. It is more than this. These teachings of the scriptures have led me into personal comradeship with our living Lord. The teachings of Christian Stewardship have helped me to understand a little better what Jesus meant when He said, "I will love him and manifest myself to him." For this greatest of all promises to me is conditioned as the context indicates. When one of the disciples replied, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world?" the reply of Jesus was to the effect that a disciple's apprehension and experience of the risen and invisible Christ would be in proportion to his faithfulness as the steward of his Lord.

Said Jesus, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." (Saint John 14:21)

It would seem that my message to you tonight is to be in the character of a testimony. As our chairman was speaking I recalled my first visit to Toronto. It was some years ago. I came to speak on the same subject, Christian Stewardship, at a Union meeting. With me came Dr. John Goucher, one of the great men in American Methodism. I had just been elected, as a young man, as stewardship secretary of the Methodist Church. On our way, Dr. Goucher, that very tactful man, gave me some advice which I have never forgotten. He said, "Brother Cushman, you know when we are elected to a job like this, we are not expected to make great speeches. What they want of us, I think, is

just to give our testimony." I thanked him then and have thanked him a great many times since. One of our troubles today is that we have forgotten that Jesus said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me."

When I was a boy in college in New England, I went over to a neighboring city to hear the man who was one of the greatest preachers in the United States at that time, Dr. George A. Gordon of Boston. It was a college congregation and he began his message by telling of a professor at Amherst who always began one of his courses every semester in the same way. He would say, "There is one thing that I ought to say at the beginning. To those of you who think you can skin through this course the way you try to skin through other courses in this college: It can't be done. You will get out of this course exactly what you put into it. And, if you put nothing in, that is exactly what you will get out!"

Dr. Gordon then took that statement as a kind of text. He said, "Our churches are full of people like that. They seem to think they can skin through their religious duties here on earth and then skin into Heaven. I want to tell you young people that it cannot be done!"

It is about thirty years since that great preacher spoke those words and I have not forgotten how he went on to say that most of these church members "have never understood what the call of Christ really is."

And now let me bring back another great personality who made a lasting impression upon my youthful mind: It was Bishop James M. Thoburn, the Apostle to India. On that New England platform he gave his witness concerning the reality of the living Christ, and his experience of the great promise in tonight's scripture. "When I first went to India," he said, "As I walked down the gang-plank and put my feet down on Indian soil, I was conscious of the Presence of my Lord going along by my side."

Now what this boy preacher said to himself was something like this: "Does that old bishop really mean what he says; or is it just a figure of speech?" I floundered around with these questions until, months after, a splendid woman who knew God came into our home and gave us the words of another great bishop, Phillips Brooks. These are the words that had been hanging on the wall of my study for many years, "All experience grows to be more and more the pressure of His life on ours. He is here. I know Him. He knows me. It is no figure of speech. It is the realest thing in the world. And every day it grows realer until one wonders with delight what it will grow to as the years go on."

And so I had the testimony of two great Christians, a James Thoburn and a Phillips Brooks—both witnessing as to the reality of Jesus' great promise, "I will manifest myself to him."

So tonight I wish to say to you, my friends, that it is a blessed hour when one comes to know for himself this experience of the invisible Presence.

I can but testify;
Words may not tell
This dear companionship
I know so well;
Ears may be deaf,
Eyes may not see
This Presence who comes near
And speaks with me;
But realer than this world
With all its grace
Grows the Invisible
And the Unseen Face!

But who are these of whom Jesus says, "I will love him and will manifest myself to him?" The answer is, they are the Christian stewards who have been faithful in stewardship. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them," said Jesus.

This is just what our scripture says, "I will manifest myself to you. In a little while I am going away. The world will not see me, but you will."

Now I do not wonder that one of his disciples spoke up and said to Jesus, "Master, how is it that Thou will manifest Thyself to us and not to the world?" And what did he say? Here is where stewardship comes in. This is what He said, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them" — there is no mysticism or magic about it, faithful stewardship is the key, "He it is that loveth me."

What did George Gordon mean when he said, "Most people in our churches have never understood what the call of Christ really is?" What do most people think? A sort of ticket to heaven? That is the tragedy of it that there are so many who think that Jesus said, "Come unto me and I will take you to heaven." He never said anything like that. He did say, "Come unto me and I will give you a cross!"

There is a heaven, bless God. I sat beside my old mother last August and watched her as she went. It was perfectly natural when the nurse said, "She is going," for me to say, "Lord Jesus, here comes my mother, take her." For Jesus had said, "I go to prepare a place for you and I will come again and receive you unto myself."

But so far as I can find, Jesus never said, "Come unto me and I will take you to heaven." Rather it was a call to be born into the heavenly life and then to go out with Him into a life of stewardship which would transform the world. If our churches do not accomplish a better job at preaching and living Christian Stewardship than did the old Russian Church they will die just as that Church has done. I have no doubt concerning the final victory of the Church of Christ. Jesus said, "On this rock will I build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

We must remember however that this victorious church, he called, "My Church" and the context goes to show that His Church is one that has two outstanding characteristics. The first characteristic is a

real fellowship with the living Christ and the second, which assures the first, is one of stewardship which makes a church aggressive and triumphant.

The other day I found in an old note book a significant sentence. It has quotation marks around it. Referring to the work of the Holy Spirit the speaker said, "What we first need is not filling but soldering!" The thought is, of course, that every man has leaks which he himself is expected to take care of before he can ask the Holy Spirit to fill the temple.

It was a similar illustration that a distinguished English preacher gave me last summer. He said that in one of the suburban churches of London there was a layman who was forever repeating in a weekly prayer service, his petition to be "filled with the Spirit." The prayer was evidently a hang-over from more vital days for the member's life never seemed to give evidence that his prayer was answered.

There was at least one man who thought he knew the reason. And one night as the brother was saying his customary prayer, "Lord, fill me; fill me, Lord!" the deacon was heard to ejaculate, "Lord, it's no use, he leaks!"

Judged from scripture and experience the deacon was right in his theory. No one can hope to know the Spirit filled life without giving honest attention to "the leaks." This is absolutely in accord with Jesus' statement, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me and I will love him and will manifest myself to him."

The importance of the Christian Stewardship message is exactly here. It points out that the disciple of Jesus must be faithful in his prayer obligations, his money obligations and every obligation that has to do with the growth of his life. That is where Christian Stewardship comes in.

People are not going to be filled with the spirit of God until the leaks are stopped. You know what they are. The way you spend your time. The way you observe the Sabbath. The way you neglect prayer. The way you do or do not spend your money.

I remember a stewardship story which illustrates this. It came to me first hand a few years ago when I was stewardship secretary of the Methodist Church.

Down in Kentucky was a physician who was very severe in his criticism of the Church. Now the ground of his criticism lay in the fact that he had met unpleasantly a number of stingy and, in his judgment, dishonest churchmen. Being naturally generous himself he had strong convictions on the "money test." His philosophy was, "*You can tell the sincerity of a man's interest in anything by the way he puts his money into it.*" So out of his unfortunate experiences he proceeded to make the generalization that church members as a class are stingy and therefore hypocritical.

Thus he continued to reason until one day there came within his own horizon a young girl of heroic Christian spirit and simple devotion. With six others, this girl had joined in a covenant to pay one

tenth of her income to the support of a struggling mission in the poorer part of a Kentucky city. It mattered not that her weekly wage was only three dollars and fifty cents. Nor did her faith waver because the income of her sick mother was pitifully small. God was calling and she followed the call.

But at the end of the first week she was in trouble. No one had told her that it was the *first* tenth of income that was to be set apart as "the first fruits" unto the Lord. On Saturday afternoon she went home sorrowful. Her week's bills had been paid, but of the tenth there remained only a few pennies for the mission. In her grief she threw herself down on her bed and wept. But no comfort came until a little pet dog—her only luxury—jumped up, with great show of sympathy, upon her bed.

Then she remembered that a certain physician had made her a standing offer of twenty-five dollars for the pet. As she thought of it, a lump rose in her throat, and the struggle began in her heart. But the mission loomed large, and her covenant must not be broken. By night the physician owned the dog, and when the morning came, a young woman with a holy peace in her soul, and a glory on her face, laid the price of her sacrifice on the altar of the mission.

Years ago the great Master had witnessed a similar act of sacrificial devotion, and He had said, "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." And now it was not His will that the account of another young woman's devotion should be kept in a corner. Indeed, it was told in many a place, but in particular it came to the physician. It jarred him. Were there many more like her? Yes, there were six others who had made the same covenant! Then the physician pondered his philosophy, "You can tell the sincerity of a man's interest in anything by the way he puts his money into it." He was under conviction.

A few nights later, when the young lady came home from her work, a happy dog met her at the door. Attached to his collar was an envelope containing a check for one hundred dollars! The Lord was at work in the physician's heart. A few weeks later the skeptic was converted, joined the Church of Christ, and became a loyal supporter of the mission. I have in my possession a photograph of that pet dog as he stood with the envelope attached to his neck. A perusal of the picture helps to prompt the question, Does religion have a money test? It certainly did for that Kentucky physician.

This story is just an illustration of many of the implications of the gospel of Christian Stewardship. Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me and I will love him and manifest myself to him." It is very evident that there is a vital relation between faithfulness in stewardship and fellowship with Christ.

Lord Jesus, we praise Thee, we worship Thee. Oh Christ, this old world is just waiting to see Thee lifted up. Thou wast lifted up on a cross once by Thine enemies. Oh

Jesus, Lord, help us to lift Thee up in our lives. There is none other name under heaven but Thine to save this world. The Stalins, the Hitlers, the Mussolinis shall pass, but Thy word shall never pass. Help us to be good stewards of the Gospel to the great glory of Thy holy name. Amen.

Stewardship as Commitment

Leonard M. Outerbridge

I am especially happy to speak on this subject. When I was a boy of eleven in Bermuda, I wrote a letter to a man in Toronto, F. C. Stephenson, who is sitting in the audience tonight. I had a gracious and lovely letter in answer and thus began a correspondence which continued through my high school days and led to my commitment to the ministry, and finally to mission work in China. It illustrates the subject.

I sometimes think that assigned subjects are the most difficult. I am going to ask, therefore, that at the outset we reach certain agreements in regard to what we mean by the words we use.

I.

Our subject, stewardship as commitment, raises the question, To what? For two days we have spent considerable time trying to agree on what we have in mind when we use the word, stewardship. We get so tangled up with words. I recall the evolution trial in Dayton, Tenn., when I was a student in Chicago. What one man called evolution, another called tradition, and another, God.

Is there not an analogy here like the one which exists between theology and religion? Theology is a description of something, a system of logical thought, indeed a science as truly as geology. Religion is quite different. One is abstract, the other vibrant with life.

There is a similar illustration in botany. My father had a great deal of wisdom. He brought up eight boys. He knew and loved boys. When I dreamed of becoming a minister, he said, go and make a success of something else first, and if you find you can do something else besides preach, I will agree to your becoming a minister. He put me to the study of agriculture and I discovered a vast difference between botany and gardening. Many a botanist I have met could not grow a good lawn. It may be true that some theologians have very little religion. I believe that those who make a specialty of stewardship are apt to treat it in the same way.

What is the missing link we must discover. I think we may find it if we can discover to just what we wish to be committed when we talk about stewardship.

My answer comes out of experience. Dr. Stephenson did not send the eleven-year boy stewardship literature. He committed him to the stewardship of life, not to one-tenth of what he might possess, but to all that he had. He committed me to a missionary faith. I do not believe a person can be a Christian without living as a missionary of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. My authority for that conviction is our Lord Himself.

On the night of His betrayal, just before He went into the garden,

He reveals more than at any other hour, the deep passion of His soul.

> I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. . . . . and now I come to Thee. I pray not that Thou should'st take them out of the world, but that Thou should'st keep them from evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. . . Oh, righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have declared unto them Thy name and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them.

That is why I say to you that a man or woman cannot truly be a disciple of Jesus Christ, and is unworthy of the name of Christian unless he can accept and identify with their lives, a missionary faith.

II.

Missionary faith is an integral part of all that we conceive of as Christian. Christian stewardship, therefore, must be commitment to the missionary's faith. This statement again involves reaching a common definition regarding terms. Who is a missionary? What is faith?

We commonly conceive of a missionary as one going across the seas in ships. Some of you who have had to stay at home make it embarrassing for us by putting a halo around our heads. I am going to tell you what Dr. Stephenson wrote me when I was eleven. I asked about going to be a missionary and he wrote back that those who go down to battle and those who tarry with the stuff shall share and share alike; that the missionary enterprise was built upon men and women who would dedicate their lives and permit God to direct them whether they should go or stay; and whether they went or stayed, they were equally identified with this adventure of building the great Kingdom of God.

When I went to China the American Board endeavored to use one life willing to go to get others to match their faith with his. A church in New England was asked whether it could subscribe another twelve or fourteen hundred dollars to send a missionary to China. The pastor said, No. He was asked if he had ten families who were not contributing anything to missions but who could raise fourteen hundred dollars. The pastor said, Yes. So a supper was arranged and they were informed of the young man from Chicago who was ready to go if they would contribute the money and be partners in a great adventure. The love of God reached out to them. One man told me afterward that he had never given a nickel to missions in his life until he was asked to give $200 a year for five years. I do not believe you could have gotten him to give a dime on the basis of stewardship, yet he gave what he did as a steward of God. Stewardship is the name we give to that experience which a man enters when he becomes committed to a missionary faith. Truly the folks who shared this expenditure were as much mis-

sionaries as were my wife and myself. They went with us. The missionary is not the only one that goes. It is the inner circle of fellowship, the heart of the church, that is missionary.

III.

Then what is their faith? It is something very different from a creed or dogma. I believe that faith for the Christian is an affirmation of values we know. It was something like this that burst on Peter on the road to Caeserea Phillipi when Christ asked His disciples what men said about Him. The disciples replied. They compared Him to Moses and the prophets and even to John the Baptist. But whom say ye that I am? was Jesus' question to them. You know Peter's answer: Thou art the Christ. Where did he get that answer? Who told him? Jesus said: Flesh and blood has not revealed this unto thee, but only my Father which is in heaven.

There entered into the heart of Peter in that hour a commitment which completely changed his life, so that he was forever after different. It is the difference which counted. It is the difference which resulted in making the man into the steward. If you can find how Peter discovered that Jesus was the Christ, I think you will find the secret of stewardship.

May it not have been that there suddenly dawned on Peter a realization of the highest values that a human mind could comprehend which theretofore had been associated only with Jehovah, the Lord God, holiness, truth, majesty, sacrifice and love? Suddenly they were revealed in the way Jesus spoke, the way He walked, in the very touch of His fingers. Therefore Peter could say, I know who Thou art, Thou art the Christ.

The missionary faith discovers a new sense of values. His faith is the affirmation of the highest values which he knows and these he sees enshrined in Jesus Christ. It is not a code; it transcends the Levitical law; it bursts through all laws and creeds because of His life.

IV.

There came a young man to Jesus one day, asking: What lack I yet? The answer was, Go, sell all that thou hast and give it to the poor and follow me. The young man turned away sorrowful because he had great possessions. Jesus' comment was: If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me. Jesus was not peculiar, nor was He unique in this statement. Self deinal is a coin rung on the counter of life for anything and everything men want to buy. They will deny themselves all sorts of things to buy a new car or a radio or pleasures. This is not peculiar to the Christian religion. But that we deny ourselves everything that comes between us and the building of the Kingdom of God in the hearts of men, that is peculiar.

Money is a strange thing. I do not quite understand why we are so reticent about it in the church. Money is the most wonderful thing

in all the world, it is awesome. All of us have some of it. Some of us have more of it than others. None of us can do without it. It is the common medium by which we can exchange our time for goods, or our goods for other goods. By it we can transfer a portion of our time from one side of the world to another. There never was a time in history when the world has needed things which money can provide as today.

There are today 50 million people on the march in India. Six million of them are Christians. Why are they marching? They are dissatisfied. They are outcasts, despised and rejected of men. Yet among them are the greatest citizens and the most influential men in India today. When the appeal came three years ago to the great missionary conference, all we could do was to send three more missionaries back there.

One of my friends from India was home a short time ago. Her heart was burning as she thought of the girls of her district with no opportunity to know there was a Father in Heaven who loved them. Someone told her of a young lawyer in one of the great office buildings in New York. Armed with a letter she went to see him. She asked him for forty dollars to maintain one Indian girl in an educational institution for a year. But as he started to write her a check she seized his arm and cried, Do you realize what I will do with that 40 dollars? I am going out from my station forty miles and find a girl of one of the tribes and bring her in to school. There will be other girls there with her and before this year is up, she will have had her eyes opened and she will yearn to stay another five or eight or ten years. Unless you promise to give me that forty dollars every year for ten years, I won't do it, I won't do it. Young lady, said the lawyer, any time you want to leave the Board you can have a place in my office, until then I will give you forty dollars a year.

In the task of winning men to give their allegiance to Jesus Christ our Lord, go out and say to them, as Jesus said to Peter, Here are the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatsoever you will, you can open.

NOTES